



Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor
Barry S. Maram, Director

Illinois Department of Public Aid

201 South Grand Avenue East
Springfield, Illinois 62763-0001

Telephone: (217) 782-0545
TTY: (800) 526-5812

01/09/04

INFORMATIONAL NOTICE

TO: Providers of Long Term Care

RE: Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for Social Security Benefits

Social Security Administration (SSA) benefits will be increased effective with the benefit received in January 2004. As in previous years, the budgeting process has been automated to help achieve timely processing of the increased SSA benefits for Medical Assistance residents. This action relieves the local office caseworker of budgeting the increased SSA benefits.

The action being taken by the Department of Public Aid applies only to changes in SSA benefits. If the amount of the credit is adjusted because of other factors, the Department of Human Services (DHS) local office will notify the resident and facility of the adjusted credit amount for January 2004.

A client notice, CN #03.14, Notice of Change in Amount Owed for Long Term Care, has been mailed to each resident whose SSA amount has been centrally budgeted. This notice contains case specific information regarding the resident's January 2004 SSA benefits and, effective January 2004, the amount the resident has available to apply toward the cost of care.

Long term care facilities were recently mailed a provider specific listing entitled "LTC Central Budgeting of COLA Adjustment" identifying those residents whose SSA COLA adjustments were centrally budgeted. The report contained the resident's name, recipient identification number, the amount of the January 2004 credit, and the amount of the January 2004 SSA benefit check as identified by the SSA. Local office staff will budget SSA adjustments for residents who are not listed on the report.

In the event that the amount in the notice and the amount of the SSA check received by the resident do not agree or a resident's name does not appear in the notice, please contact the caseworker immediately so the budgeted income amount can be corrected as promptly as possible.

E-mail: dpawebmaster@mail.state.il.us

Internet: <http://www.dpaininois.com>

The central updating of patient credits in the long term care billing system is an annual effort to process the January SSA cost of living increases. Following this special January 2004 income updating process, income changes should be reported to the DHS local office in the usual manner.

Anne Marie Murphy, Ph.D
Administrator
Division of Medical Programs